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The Spiritual Dead-End Path of the Moscow Patriarchate

By Bishop Kyrill of Seattle of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad

Editors' Introduction

This article was written by then-Bishop Kyrill of Seattle of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia (ROCOR). It was originally published in the 1999 edition of *Orthodox Tradition*, a periodical dedicated to traditionalist Orthodox Christian life, thought, and the Old Calendarist struggle against the heresy of ecumenism.

At the time of its writing and publication, Bishop Kyrill clearly recognized the dangers of the pan-heresy of ecumenism and the Moscow Patriarchate's active involvement in the World Council of Churches (WCC). He strongly warned the faithful to flee from the Moscow Patriarchate due to its deep entanglement in the ecumenical movement and its membership in the WCC.

Regrettably, Bishop Kyrill did not remain on the path of confessing True Orthodoxy as he advocated for in this article. Like many of his fellow bishops, who now make up the current synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia–Moscow Patriarchate, he ultimately capitulated, accepting communion with the Moscow Patriarchate, along with its continued membership in the WCC and participation in the heretical ecumenical movement. As a result, the new ROCOR has become, in effect, a participant in the heretical ecumenical movement it once opposed and victim to its own 1983 anathema against ecumenism.

This article provides a clear example of how many ROCOR hierarchs viewed the Moscow Patriarchate—and World Orthodoxy more broadly—prior to the false union of 2007 and their eventual abandonment of the traditional Orthodox confession.

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At the present time—a time of religious decline and of spiritual and moral decadence throughout the whole world (which is attempting to envelop Russia as well)—, one cannot remain unconcerned by the spiritual condition of the Russian people. After the supposed fall of the communist regime, our vision was focused on Russia, with hopes for her rebirth. But later we discerned the fraud underlying this “fall,” in which a significant role was played by the perennial enemy of Russia: the West.



Archbishop Krill with Metropolitan Hilarion (Kapral) & Mark Arndt the Architect of the 2007 False Union

Rejoicing with all of our hearts at the restoration of destroyed Churches and the construction of new ones, and at the conversion of many people to the Faith, we still see with sorrow that the path taken by the Moscow Patriarchate has not changed at all, and is, as before, leading the Russian people to nowhere: into a spiritual dead-end of religious modernism, compromise, and acquiescence.

Instead of addressing and resolving all of the canonical and dogmatic questions that led to the division of the Russian Church, and instead of leading their people to victory over the powers of evil by pure Orthodoxy and by the truth handed to us by the Fathers, the Hierarchs of the Moscow Patriarchate are moving farther and farther away from the Truth, in the direction of the pan-heresy of ecumenism.

From the earliest of times, the Church of Christ has withstood the trials of various heresies. In the past, the devil attempted to fight against the truth of Christ with a series of heresies; now he has gathered together all of the falsehoods of the world in ecumenism. Here we find ancient Arians, Monophysites, Monothelites, Iconoclasts, and all sorts of distortions of the Faith by contemporary sects, by non-Christian, and even by pagan religions.

Ecumenism calls for the removal of barriers not only between the various Christian confessions, but also between religions, in order to create a “Great Church,” which would be the synthesis of all existing churches and religions. At this time, already, there are joint services being performed with the participation of representatives of various world religions and confessions. Here are just a few examples of the liturgical innovations of the ecumenists with which the Moscow Patriarchate has joined: ritual dances by natives around the Altar Table; the liturgical use of contemporary rock music; theatrical shows; joint prayer; and even the common celebration of the “eucharist.”

All of this has shown that the teaching of the Holy Fathers regarding an ancient axiom, that “the Communion of the heretics is the food of the demons,” has been forgotten. These types of ecumenical joint activities attempt to destroy the boundaries of the Church of Christ and lead to the furtherance of religious relativism and the dissemination of neo-pagan ideas.



Met. Anthony of Volokolamsk, Chair of the Moscow Patriarchate Department of External Church Relations meets with Thailand's Buddhist Supreme Patriarch in Bangkok, November 28, 2024.

The ecumenical movement has grown to enormous proportions and has engulfed almost all of the Orthodox Churches. The Russian Orthodox Church Abroad remains one of the few Churches in the whole world that has not joined the World Council of Churches. Understanding the nature of the abyss toward which the Moscow Patriarchate is pulling the faithful people of Russia, we acknowledge our responsibility before them.

Undoubtedly, there are still clergy and laity in Russia who are not in agreement with the ecumenical orientation and compromising ideology of the Moscow Patriarchate. And it is for that reason that we would like to say to them: "Truth does not permit disagreement in questions of Faith. Now is the time to turn away from the evil fruit and to return to the Truth, which was given to us as an inheritance by the Holy Fathers and Teachers of the Church, which has withstood the fires of tribulation, and to which the blood and sufferings of the New Martyrs of Russia have shown witness" [1].

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